

# **OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMIC ECOSYSTEM TASK FORCE**

## **MEETING MINUTES**

Friday, July 28, 2006, 10:00 a.m. – 2:20 p.m.

State Capitol Complex, East Building

Cafeteria – Beehive Room

### **MEMBERS/ASSOCIATE MEMBERS PRESENT**

ANDERSON, Nan	Utah Tourism Industry Coalition (UTIC)
BOHN, Laura	Project Manager, GOPB (Governor's Office of Planning and Budget)
BURR, Steve	Institute for Outdoor Recreation and Tourism (IORT) at Utah State University
CUTLER, Riley	Wasatch Touring - Owner/Manager
DEAVER, Mike	<b>Co-Chair</b> , DCED – Division of Tourism
DURTSCHI, Steve	Utah Back Country Pilots Association
HARJA, John	Public Lands Policy Coordinator's Office (PLPCO)
MCKEE, Michael J.	Uintah County Commission
OKERLUND, Ralph	Sevier County Commission
RASMUSSEN, Roody	Petzl America
STOWELL, Dennis	Iron County Commission
WANG, Steve	Quintstar Management Company, Inc.
WILSON, Jenny	Salt Lake County Council Member

### **MEMBERS EXCUSED**

COLLETT, Craig	Daggett County Commissioner
HERBERT, Gary R.	<b>Co-Chair</b> ; Lieutenant Governor, State of Utah
KORENBLAT, Ashley	Western Spirit Cycling (telephone)
METCALF, Peter	Black Diamond
STEVENS, Lynn H.	Coordinator, Public Lands Policy Coordinator's Office (PLPCO)
STYLER, Michael R.	Department of Natural Resources, Director
TULLIUS, Mary	DNR, Director, Division of Parks and Recreation

### **GUESTS/ PRESENTERS**

BRADFORD, Dick	Former Director of Community and Culture; Retired County Commissioner
CALLISTER, Jake	Planning Intern (GOPB)
CHRISTY, Kim	Trust Land Administration (SITLA)
DANIELS, Kevin	Planning Intern (GOPB)
FARRAND, Bill	National Park Service (NPS) – RTCA
GARCIA, Tim	U S Forest Service
ROY, Cordell	National Park Service (NPS)
STUCKI, Eric	State Parks

### **STAFF**

NEILSON, Nancy	GOPB – Administrative Assistant
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#### **I. Welcome and Introductions – Mike Deaver**

Mike Deaver opened the meeting and invited everyone to introduce themselves.

#### **II. Approval of Minutes**

The June 16, 2006 meeting minutes were provided in the packet and were previously sent to members via email in a PDF document. Mike Deaver asked if anyone was not receiving the emails regarding minutes and meeting times.

**Action Taken:**

**Steve Burr made the motion to approve the minutes and Riley Cutler seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

**III. Personnel**

- Laura Bohn-Ault was congratulated on her recent marriage!
- Laura Bohn will replace Mike Hansen as a member of the Task Force and will not be able to continue her dedicated staff support.
- Nancy Neilson has accepted a new position in the Governor's Office.
- Dick Bradford of the Outdoor Industry Association will give support to Mike Deaver and the Task Force agenda. A final decision regarding his role will be made by August 8<sup>th</sup>.

Mike Deaver's comments were as follows:

*"...This is sad, but Nancy Neilson who has been here since the inception of the Task Force for the most part, is moving to be the Office Manager for the Governor's Office! (Many members voiced warm congratulations at this point.) We hope to keep her for one more meeting but after that we will be moving on and look to replace Nancy, which is pretty much impossible to do. I would just like to thank Nancy publicly for all of her help; you've been great to work with and I wish we could keep you and I'm going to be calling Neil (Ashdown)."*

*"As you know, one of the things we have been working on with OIA is to get a full-time staff person for this Task Force. This is something we have had several discussions about between the Governor's Office and other people here in State Government. We're still working on that. We are closer than we have been to fulfilling that position. As you know, Laura has a grant project she needs to devote more time to as well as Mike Hansen. So Laura will most likely take Mike Hansen's spot (as a member of the Task Force) and Mike will move on to assist with the grant program. So we will be replacing Nancy and Laura's functions; Laura has been invaluable to this process as well! We are trying to get someone part-time or full-time who can dedicate their time to this Task Force."*

Dick Bradford, former Director of Community and Culture said:

*"I have had discussions with Gary (Lieutenant Governor Herbert) and some of the Governor's staff about providing some additional resources to the Task Force. And as Mike has pointed out, we are losing some very key people to the process already. And looking at the timeline that the Task Force has and the deliverables that you have on your table between now and the end of the year we just felt that some additional resources for Mike, probably would be very helpful. They have discussed with me briefly my playing some kind of a role... where I can be a resource to what is already happening and supporting Mike and you folks in meeting your agenda. So that's why I'm here."*

**Subcommittee Reports**

**1. Mexican Mountain, San Rafael Swell (WSA) – Steve Wang and Steve Durtschi**

A Power Point presentation by Steve Wang included photographs taken by Steve Durtschi.

Steve Durtschi, a member of the Utah Backcountry Pilots Association opened the presentation by saying, *“Steve (Wang) and I were asked to look at that area as becoming one of Utah’s Gems. I am very passionate about the Mexican Mountain area. I have been going there with my wife and family for many, many years. Mexican Mountain is truly a recreation gem.”* (Emery County promotes this area in their maps and brochures.)

Comprising the San Rafael River, this area offers access to lands with wilderness character; Indian petroglyphs; and short hikes with spectacular views. Activities in the area include; hiking to scenic vistas in steep canyons; camping, the primitive and unconfined wilderness experience, seeing ancient and modern historical sites; and float trips. Sites around the sombrero shaped mountain include, the Upper and Lower Black Box (Swasey’s Leap) areas; Spring Canyon, and Horse Thief Pass. The land area totals 46,900 acres.

Located 20 miles west of Green River and in the center of the San Rafael Swell, there are two ways to access these spectacular hikes. One way is to walk in, an easy 2.5 miles from the end of the road to the trail heads; the other is to land a small aircraft on a dirt landing strip.

Commissioner Ralph Okerlund of Sevier County said, *“It’s been my experience that the campers and hikers there get along with the airplanes just fine. Of course, once the airplanes are there, they are tied down and are very unobtrusive. They don’t run up and down the country or the washes. They’re just there. 99% of the hikers that I have seen there over the years think that it’s kind of unique that they(the airplanes) are there.”*

The Wilderness Study Area (WSA) mandated by Congress for the Mexican Mountain area includes the following points of interest;

- Only ‘casual maintenance’ is allowed (the use of hand tools only).
- Mechanized vehicles are prohibited including motorized bicycles.
- The area is monitored by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- The existing 1950’s airstrip is Grandfathered from the ban. The airfield was built prior to the Federal Land Management Policy Act of 1976 (FLPMA) and is recognized by the BLM and State Aeronautics as a legitimate air field. Commercial flights may require a permit process. (A Title 5 Right of Way is authorized by the BLM.)

There is a possibility that Emery County will pursue a RS2477 challenge on a road in the area. Skyline Oil may have built a road there in the early 1970’s.

**Steve Durtschi and Steve Wang will meet to finalize their recommendation and they will email information (letters, etc.) regarding Mexican Mountain to Task Force members. (See PDF document)**

## **2. Cache County (Tony Grove in Logan Canyon) – Steve Burr for Mike Hansen**

Steve Burr filled in for Mike Hansen. The U S Forest Service’s Scoping Document regarding Tony Grove – Franklin Basin Winter Recreation was included in the packet. Comments were due May 15<sup>th</sup> 2006. According to Tim Garcia of the U S Forest Service a proposal for mitigation was introduced by snowmobiler’s and

cross country skiers but ended in litigation. Another proposal will probably not be entertained by the Forest Service.

Steve said, “One way to solve this may be as easy as moving or creating a new parking lot so that the snowmobilers and the motorized recreationists have their own parking lot away from the snowmobilers. A lot of the complaints from the skiers are the noise.” There is some collaboration taking place between the two groups.

*“Our Institute of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism (IORT) received money from USU Extension and the US Forest Service to facilitate a collaborative learning process related to travel management up in the Logan Ranger District.” This will be a telephone survey of residents in Cache and Rich Counties to find out the residents recreational use of the district. This information will be shared with the stakeholder groups because right now there is no data. Also, there is The National Visitors Use Monitoring Project which USU is conducting for the Forest Service so there will be some surveying done in the Forests.”*

If the Task Force wants to respond to the situation, John Harja reminded the group that the State responds to Federal actions. Therefore, the Task Force would need to comment through the Resource Development Coordinating Committee (RDCC), at the Public Lands Policy Coordinator’s Office (PLPCO).

State Parks is trying to see if the conflict of land use between the snowmobilers and the back country skiers can be resolved. According to Bill Farrand, SITLA is considering selling part of their land to assist in this resolution process. USU would like to acquire this area (Beaver Mountain Track) or part of it for a Scenic By-ways Visitors Center or for a Recreation Resource Management Laboratory which they would use for their degree programs.

### **3. Gem List – Laura Bohn-Ault**

Laura has contacted the individual at Utah State University’s Extension Service who assisted with the Gem’s survey website and said it should be available again online in a day or two.

Commissioner McKee encouraged contacting those counties who have not completed their gems list. Some counties have been explicit in their recommendations but others have not. This information could then be compiled.

Laura said that some counties have done an excellent job and have submitted five gems with complete information. Others have submitted a hundred gems but the information wasn’t complete.

**Tim Garcia of the Forest Service** recommended that the land managers be informed of the Task Force actions so their recommendations can be on ‘their radar screen.’ He suggested they be invited to the meetings since most of these gems are on Federal lands.

Mike Deaver reported on the meetings the Task Force has been holding with State and Federal land managers in different counties and the vast amount of information these meetings provide. First the Task Force has met with local government officials and then they have presented their gem recommendations to the land managers for further input.

Laura said that there is a representative from the Office of Planning and Budget (GOPB) attending all AOG meetings. Laura attends the Bear River Association of Governments (BRAG) and Brian Cottam also of the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget attends all other AOG meetings.

#### **4. Legislative – Nan Anderson**

##### **National Heritage Highway 89**

Mont Bona and Gary Anderson from San Pete County have worked for six years on the first State of Utah, National Heritage Highway which is Highway 89. The bill is on President Bush's desk to sign. This is 89 from Kanab up through San Pete County and includes the Boulder Loop Scenic By-way 12. This enables the group to request federal funding which will help them get organized. These funds are authorized by Congress every year and there is a 50% match requirement. They have also received a Marketing Coop grant from the State.

##### **Meetings with Candidates**

In this election year, half of the Senate and the entire House are up for re-election. Meetings with each of the candidates are being scheduled with travel representatives, private sector representatives, and a representative from UTIC or one of the UTIC lobbyists. The purpose of these meetings will be to inform the candidates about tourism "being a viable part of economic development in each district in Utah." Nan will get a schedule out.

##### **IMBA (International Mountain Bikers Association)**

"Through the International Mountain Bikers Association (IMBA) we received a concerned email (IMBA)," Nan said. This was regarding the closure of hundreds of miles of single track for bikes in Montana by the Forest service. Nan said she didn't know of any closures in Utah. Tim Garcia of the Forest Service said that there might be travel issues involved.

##### **Tourism Tax Revenue**

Nan reported, *"Our tourism tax revenue appears to be up substantially. We just received reports from Dave Williams of the Office of Tourism. Transient room tax is up 12% year to date. The restaurant tax is up 25% year to date. That bodes well for our requirement as an industry to go back to the Legislature and report back 'return on investment' from the 10 million dollar expenditure from the last fiscal year."* See <http://travel.utah.gov/> for more details.

##### **National Marketing for the US**

The Tourism Industry is coming together to try and get a national tourism group with federal funding to market tourism in the United States with a Travel leadership summit to be held in September. "Senator Bennett is the only one of our Congressional delegation who is a member of the Travel and Tourism Caucus." She hopes to see all five Congressional delegates be members. Mike Deaver noted that the UK promotion has brought tremendous results.

**The brand new travel guide for the State of Utah** was passed out by Mike Deaver. It includes a 'tear out' map and section topics include; Scenic Places, Outdoor Fun, Guides & Tour Operators, Regional Fun, and Major Utah Events. To obtain more travel guides call 1-866-370-4500. Dick Bradford congratulated the Office of Tourism for an excellent job on this guide and their "focus on areas of interest by potential tourists rather than focusing so much on geographic venue" was commendable.

#### **5. Green River Review – Mike Deaver**

The update will come later after another meeting. Ashley is on vacation and this committee will meet a couple of weeks before the next Task Force meeting.

Ashley did meet with Governor Jon M. Huntsman, Jr. regarding Moab and its potential to be the Mountain Bike/Slick Rock Mecca of the world. This meeting went very well.

## **6. AOG Schedule**

There are seven Associations of Government (AOG) units. The next meetings for all of these groups are in August and September. Mike Deaver said that members of the Task Force will plan to attend their meetings and inform them about Task Force activities and request a list of gems from the counties that haven't participated in the gems survey.

For more information on the Associations of Government see  
<http://www.governor.utah.gov/planning/aog/aog.htm>

## **IV. Other Business**

### **1. LeRay McAllister Fund – John Bennett (Power Point has more information)**

Named after a former legislator, the LeRay McAllister Critical Land Conservation Fund represents the preservation of 'quality of life.' The fruits of the fund include: scenic hiking areas on rocky mountain tops; a field of freshly baled hay; farm animals for school children to observe; critical lands near flowing rivers; historical sites protected, wildlife habitat preserved; crucial wetlands that filter water, hatch fish and provide flood protection; and open spaces that generate feelings of peace.

Administered by the Utah Quality Growth Commission, this fund makes grants to local governments, 501c3 Organizations, the Departments of Natural Resources and Agriculture for the purpose of preserving or restoring open and agricultural land and requires a match of at least 50% of the total project cost. Because there is so much interest in preserving critical lands, the matches are frequently much higher.

The Commission members consist of city and county officials, farmers and ranchers, homebuilders and realtors, citizens at-large, the Director of the Department of Natural Resources, the Commissioner of Agriculture and Food and there must be at least five members that reside in rural counties. They are dedicated to funding projects that are unique and irreplaceable; that have multiple benefits for the public; that are cost effective and have high leverage; and ones that are urgent and have the imminent threat of development.

Dependant on legislative and executive appropriations, the greatest challenge the Fund faces is adequate funding. Even though the demand far exceeds the actual dollars appropriated, the LeRay McAllister fund has been seriously under funded. Last week at the Nature Conservancy and Rotary Club meeting, Governor Jon M. Huntsman, Jr. made a plea for increased funding.

As of October 2005, the LeRay McAllister Critical Lands Conservation Fund has preserved 54,000 acres. This includes 58 projects in 16 counties. The fund has granted 13 million dollars with matching funds equaling 72 million.

### **Action taken**

**Rood Rasmussen made a motion to draft a letter of recommendation that the Task Force is in support of increased funding for the LeRay McAllister Fund. Jenny Wilson seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.**

The Act specifically directs the Commission to look at county critical lands plans. So if a gem is part of a county critical lands plan, this would become one of the factors that would need to be considered.

### **2. Rivers & Trails Conservation (RTCA) – Bill Farrand**

Bill Farrand of the National Park Service provided information about the Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA). He expounded on the assistance that has been given for the Bonneville Shoreline. “RTCA works with National Park managers to enhance recreational opportunities and improve visitor experiences by improving connections and partnerships between NPS units and their local communities and recreational areas.” (See handout)

An example of a Current Project: (See handout for more information)

Brian Head Recreation and Trails Plan (UT) – *“Cedar Breaks National Monument and USFS are active partners in an ongoing planning process supported by RTCA that is working to identify bicycle, snowmobile, and hiking trail connections from the town of Brian Head to Cedar Breaks national monument and the Dixie National Forest trails system. The project will create hiking trail access to Cedar Breaks trails from the adjacent gateway town. It will also propose a bicycle trail adjacent to the park’s scenic highway.”*

### **3. Flight State Park – Erik Stucki**

Erik reported on a new Flight Park State Recreation Area. This is located on the south facing slope at the point of the mountain in Draper near Micron. World class flight patterns are found here and no other state can boast about such a unique recreation site. Those that fly in this area are required to join an association that provides guidance.

### **4. Land Usage Survey – Steve Burr**

The Utah Public Lands Connection Study headed by IORT at USU and Steve Burr included Socioeconomic Baseline Profiles. Assisting in the project were PLPCO, Office of the Governor, and the State of Utah. Phase I was completed in June of this year. The results of the Public Officials rankings regarding important public lands connections were compiled with the following results.

- 1) Water
- 2) Grazing
- 3) Tourism
- 4) Oil and Gas
- 5) Minerals
- 6) Wildlife Resources
- 7) Motorized Recreation

- 8) Forest Products
- 9) Non-motorized Recreation
- 10) Wildlands
- 11) Ecological Integrity

The General Public Survey Results:

- 1) Water For Homes And Businesses
- 2) Water For Irrigation
- 3) Water For Fish And Wildlife
- 4) Trees/Vegetation Important For Wildlife
- 5) Non-Motorized Recreation
- 6) Energy Resource Development
- 7) Hunting And Fishing
- 8) Tourism And Recreation
- 9) Livestock Grazing
- 10) Biodiversity And Habitat Protection
- 11) Off-Road Motorized Recreation
- 12) Unroaded Areas And Undeveloped Landscapes
- 13) Logging And Lumber Mills
- 14) Sand, Gravel, Or Mineral Development

*“The top four connections in the public survey were the same for all AOG Regions. The next four connections were consistent across most AOG Regions. Livestock grazing varied across these regions and the lowest three were consistent across the board which included unroaded and undeveloped landscapes; logging and lumber mills; sand, gravel, or mineral development.”*

Phase II will be completed in June of 2007 and will entail a Special Study on Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Linkages on public lands in regards to local use by residents; non-local visitation; expenditures, economic connections and constraints; and social connections and constraints.

## **5. OIA events**

A meeting with members of the OIA Board will be held within the next week. The purpose of the meeting will be to inform the Outdoor Industry of the Task Force’s current status.

## **6. Little Hole Development – Mike Deaver**

A discussion ensued on the proposed Little Hole Development and the possibility that SITLA lands in the area may be leased or sold. Daggett County Commissioners, Chad L. Reed, Craig W. Collett, and Stewart Leith provided the following statement:

*“Daggett is the smallest populated county in Utah. (920 residents) Ninety percent of the county is public land. We have nearly two million visitors each year and as you can imagine this is a tremendous drain on our county to provide basic services such as; Law Enforcement, Emergency Medical Services, Fire Protection, Road Maintenance and County Government Offices.”*



*“If SITLA chooses to lease or sell the property we have asked that the following be considered: 1. No restriction to public access to the Green River; 2. Any development be done well away from the River. 3. Development blend into the environment. 4. No road improvement or increased maintenance will be paid by the county.”*

*“The county is not interested in more land being taken out of possible private development.” (Statement from Daggett County Commissioners)*

**V. Adjourn for Lunch**

(Sponsored by Utah Travel, vendor Eurest)

**VI. Public Input**

N/A

**VII. Sub-committees meetings**

To be held before or after Task Force meetings. TBA

**Adjourn 2:20 p.m.**

**Action Items:**

- 1) Draft a letter to the Governor (by Task Force members and GOPB staff) endorsing the McAllister Fund and email this to the Task Force for their approval.
- 2) Schedule a meeting between State Parks and RTCA and determine how we continue that program.
- 3) Mike and Ashley and others who will be invited to participate via email, to determine ‘best recommendation’ for the Green River Corridor and to get it off of the docket. (This group will meet two weeks before the next meeting.)
- 4) An email will be sent to everyone about the OIA press conference with those times and places.
- 5) Schedule a meeting with OIA Board members to review our current status.
- 6) AOG Boards Meeting Schedule. In August and September Task Force members will discuss gems and other topics with AOG boards. Dates and times will be confirmed and announced.
- 7) Mexican Mountain – For the next meeting we will have specific goals; recommendations or conclusions for the Task Force. Steve Durtschi and Steve Wang will meet to finalize their recommendation and they will email information (letters, etc.) regarding Mexican Mountain to Task Force members
- 8) Cache County – Mike Deaver will talk with Mike Hansen and schedule a meeting with SITLA and RDCC.
- 9) Laura to contact counties or add a plea on the website for those counties who have not completed their gems list to do so ASAP.
- 10) Nan Anderson – Will email Task Force members a schedule regarding candidate meetings.
- 11) Since Mike Hansen will be exiting also, we will re-wrap some committee assignments.
- 12) Conclusions need to be reached on staffing. Meet with Dick Bradford, the Task Force and RTCA.
- 13) The minutes will be sent by email to Task Force members.

- 14) Laura will email today's presentations to everyone.**
- 15) Mike Deaver will call Daggett County Commissioner Craig Collett regarding the Daggett County development issue.**  
*(Note: Please excuse Commissioner Collett from attending the Friday Task Force meetings. He would really like to attend according to Commissioner Dennis Stowell. However, before the meetings were changed from Thursday to Friday he could attend. As a county commissioner he has committed one day a week to his business which is Friday.)*
- 16) Task Force to invite land managers to Task Force meetings as requested by Tim Garcia.**
- 17) Staff - Make a placard for Dick Bradford**

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